

David Bannister Morgan, March 28, 1815, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

CERTIFICATE OF GENERAL DAVID B. MORGAN AND AFFIDAVIT.

March 28, 1815.

I certify, that on or about the third of Decr. 1814, which was Two or three days after the arrival of Major genl. Andrew Jackson in this City, the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, of which I was a member of the Senate, passed unanimously a vote of Thanks to Major genl. Jackson, that a Joint committee was appointed from both Houses to wait on the general and deliver the Resolution, of which committee I was one. We, according to our instructions, waited on the general, delivered our message, and welcomed him to the City. A few days afterwards we learned that the Enemy's fleets were on our coast, near Ship and Cat Island, which excited much alarm amongst the Citizens and the Legislature also. The Legislature were advised by the Executive of the State, as well as the Citizens in general, if possible, to adopt some efficient measures in order to aid the commanding officers of the land and Naval forces on this Station, to bring all forces of the country into action. Committees were appointed to report ways and means. There appeared some difference of opinion as to the best mode, but all agreed that it was nessary to act energetically. Many were in favour of a Suspension of the “ *writ of Habeas Corpus* ”; others for laying an “ *Embargo* ” in order to procure sailors. On the first of these measures the Senate, I believe, had a majority; but in the House of Representatives, there was a majority opposed to the suspension of the “ *writ of Habeas Corpus* ”; altho, a very Respectable number of the members of both House were much in favour of martial Law, believing it absolutely necessary to the savation of the State. That, the inhabitants were composed of so many different nations and diffent political opinions, the ordinary

Library of Congress

course of the laws would be too tardy and unsafe. This opinion I found prevailed very generally among the Most Respectable Citizens of this place, whom I heard converse on the subject. A few days after news arrived that the enemy had attacked our gun vessels and had taken them all. The enemy now having nothing in their way, it was expected they would make a landing immediately. The Citizen's alarms increas'd, the Legislature were rather tardy. and the great Hope was now in the Steady and firm course which was hoped the commanding general would pursue, and in whom the Country had implicit confidence. On the fifteenth of December, the commanding general Issued an order declaring Martial Law, which was very generally, (as far as I could learn) approved by the Citizens, and believ'd it the only course for our security. I heard it frequently approved, by officers of the civil authority, and of the governor of the State, and have never heard otherwise untill very lately. Such was my opinion, and I believe the opinion of the Citizens, and Civil officers of the State unversally; peticularly of those who felt an interest for the welfare of the State.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28th day of March 1815 Joshua Lewis Judge of the first District